

For Immediate Release

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Vermont Companies Recognized for Workplace Safety

Several Vermont firms were recognized today for their strong commitment to workplace safety at the Annual Vermont Workplace Safety Conference. Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin presented the annual Governor's Award for Workplace Safety to King Arthur Flour of Norwich in the Large Business Category and to Ryegate Associates of East Ryegate, and Curtis Lumber Co., of Burlington in the Small Business Category.

With more than 160 employees, King Arthur Flour is an employee-owned, team-managed company with an experience MOD of 0.86. The company's outstanding safety efforts are led by an active safety team and safety coordinator.

The Ryegate Power Station, a 20-megawatt wood-fired electricity generating plant, has had only one lost time injury in the past 19 years! Curtis Lumber, based in Burlington, with 21 other locations involved in the Voluntary Protection Company (VPP) has a MOD rate of 0.71.

Conant's Riverside Farms, LLC, with a MOD of 0.86 was considered an outstanding example of its commitment to workers who typically work long hours in a complex, hazardous environment, were the recipients of the Governor's Award for Workplace Safety in the agriculture category.

A special award was presented to Injury & Health Management Solutions, Inc., of Colchester, a rehabilitation provider for their "outstanding commitment to the protection, health and safety of the Vermont business community." IHMS has not had a recordable injury despite its staff of nine driving thousands of miles every year and manipulating heavy equipment in caring for its customers.

The Governor's Award for Workplace Safety is the highest honor given by the State of Vermont to recognize an employer's commitment to excellence in workplace safety and health. Governor Shumlin noted that job safety is one of the most important workplace issues today. These awards are recognition that the Vermont business community and these companies are very much aware of the significance of effective workplace safety.

Vermont Labor Commissioner Anne Noonan, noting that sixteen applications were screened for this award, said, "The increasing number of applicants every year attests to the importance that Vermont firms place on this recognition. We are very pleased with the continued commitment to workplace safety and health by Vermont employers over the past eight years."

Applicants were required to provide documentation stating how safety has improved their business, how they made it happen, how their company assesses its safety program for effectiveness, and how they track improvement. Threshold criteria included a MOD rate of .90 or less, no workplace fatalities or catastrophic injuries for the past three years, an active safety committee involving management and employees, plus a written safety policy including policies governing motor vehicle driver safety.

The following companies were also recognized for safety and health achievements.

Ben & Jerry's Homemade Carroll Concrete Co.

Columbia Forest Products GE Healthcare Information Technology

OMYA, Inc. VELCO

North Williston Cattle Co. (Whitcomb Farm) Rio Tinto Minerals – Vermont Operations

Sto Corp. Stoneholm Farm

Town of Castleton

The awards are sponsored by Governor Shumlin, the Vermont Department of Labor, the Vermont Safety & Health Council, and the Vermont Small Business Development Center.